

LEADER-DEVELOPMENT: ARE WE KEEPING PACE?

BY

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by

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ABSTRACT

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LEADER-DEVELOPMENT: ARE WE KEEPING PACE?

Introduction–Current Strategic Environment and Transformation

No prudent military commander wants a fair fight, seeking instead to “overmatch” adversaries in cunning, capability and commitment. The selfless service and heroism of the men and women of the well-trained all-volunteer Total Force has been a primary source of US strategic overmatch in confronting the wide range of threats we face and a key to successful military operations over the past several decades. The Total Force must continue to adapt to different operating environments, develop new skills and rebalance its capabilities and people if it is to remain prepared for the new challenge of an uncertain future [1].

—2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report

Our nation has now been at war for over four years with Iraq and Afghanistan at the forefront. We still have several other strategic threats looming at the doorstep to include Iran and North Korea’s nuclear threat, Africa’s economic and political instabilities, and our own homeland defense issues. Numerous challenges covering the entire spectrum of conflict are not new to our nation, but the attacks on September 11th have changed our security environment with multiple complex scenarios. The National Defense Strategy highlights a varied group of traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive threats that pose a real challenge to our nation (Figure 1) [2]. Enemies like Al-Qaeda will stop at nothing to destroy our way of life. Their goal is very clear: to gain control in the Islamic world by establishing a unified caliphate, stretching from North Africa to Indonesia, and to expand its influence well beyond these regions [3].

It is very evident in our current struggle and looking ahead to our future non-traditional battlefields that we must stay ahead of our enemy, especially in the human dimension. The enemy is adaptive, motivated, ruthless, and do not care about our technologies and how many gadgets we bring to the fight. Leaders and soldiers must be able to counterpunch not only as brave warriors but as adaptive, multi-talented leaders, able to perform across the full spectrum of the uncertain security environment. Soldiers and leaders have done a magnificent job dealing with this adaptive enemy, but many believe it is only the tip of the iceberg for what adversity lies ahead. Consequently, to remain relevant and stay ahead of these asymmetric threats highlighted below, we must adapt across the three levels of war while our education base spearheads behavioral change, ultimately changing our culture of leader-development.

The Security Environment	
IRREGULAR Irregular challenges from the adoption or employment of unconventional methods by non-state and state actors to counter stronger state opponents - terrorism, insurgency, civil war, etc. Seeking to erode U.S. power	CATASTROPHIC Catastrophic challenges involving the surreptitious acquisition, possession, and possible terrorist or rogue employment of WMD or methods producing WMD-like effects. Seeking to <i>paralyze</i> U.S. power
Ethnic War; Guerrilla; Insurgency; Terror	WMD: Rogue, Terrorist; Homeland Missile Attacks
TRADITIONAL Traditional challenges posed by states employing legacy and advanced military capabilities and recognizable military forces, in long-established, well-known forms of military competition and conflict. Seeking to <i>challenge</i> U.S. power	DISRUPTIVE Disruptive future challenges emanating from competitors developing, possessing, and employing breakthrough technological capabilities intended to supplant our advantages in particular operational domains. Seeking to <i>marginalize</i> U.S. power
Legacy Nuclear Forces; Uniformed Militaries	Cyber-War; Directed Energy; Genetic Weapons; Nano Weapons

Source: 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review

Figure 1. The Security Environment [4].

Nested in the current conflict is the ongoing transformation that involves doctrine, organizations, training, material, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF). Superior leadership will enable and drive these functions and is the most important element for the future. Consequently, our current Army Training and Leader-Development vision states, “Soldiers

remain the centerpiece of our formations; nothing is more important than our investment in their life long training, and development of the leaders they will follow” [5]. In my view, our people are the primary investment, and we must prioritize and accelerate the leader-development pillar of transformation with innovative real change so we can effectively synchronize the other aspects of transformation. At the very start of this transformation process, then Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) General Shinseki said, “Leadership is the most important thing we do in peacetime. Everyday, we train soldiers, and grow them into leaders” [6].

A new buzz phrase in the academic realm seems to be “unprecedented change.” Nearly every recent general officer briefing or lecture I have attended stressed how we are going through a time of “unprecedented change.” I always ask myself, does this mean transformational change or war on terror change, or a combination of both? In retrospect, it is one of the greatest transformations since the reforms made under Secretary of War Elihu Root at the beginning of the 20th century.

We deliberately sustained the decision to transform our Armed Forces during this war so we could quickly adapt to the current threat and efficiently shape our forces for the uncertainty of the future. What better time to transform our Army and induce evolutionary change than during this war on terror that continually highlights the need for change. Change during peacetime is slow and filled with competition between budgets, programs, and preserving force structure. The strategic environment is changing at such a pace that we do not have time to waste and combat will enhance and accelerate change by cutting through certain bureaucracies. We are looking at a future of extended conflict in which real peace will be the anomaly. This new era fuels our current transformation in the Army. It is the lens that shapes our perception and interpretation of the future and drives our goal of a campaign-quality Army with joint and expeditionary capability [7].

It is certainly not easy, but transformation is the process whereby the Department of Defense is overhauling the US military and defense establishment so it can most effectively counter 21st-century threats. Transformation is about new ways of thinking, fighting, and organizing the department and its operations—as well as about acquiring new system capabilities [8]. The Army has done a commendable job transforming organizations, technology, and

hardware but still needs senior command emphasis on our leader-development and professional military education (PME). It will take strong and committed leaders who can clearly communicate the *why* of cultural change regarding leader-development.

In my view, leader-development received increased attention when General Eric Shinseki starting the ball rolling in 2001. In addition, senior leaders such as General Peter Schoomaker, General David Petraeus, General John Abizaid, General Richard Cody, and General William Wallace are actively promoting significant initiatives in their respective lanes. The term *adaptive leaders* cannot be another attractive buzz word on a power point presentation. Across the Army, change must be lead with conviction and have a synchronized vision. Basic questions which need to be addressed are:

- What have leaders, both at the tactical and strategic levels, learned during the last five years of war?
- How do these lessons learned shape our future leaders?
- How does the Army change or fill the gaps in our professional education systems to stay relevant with this new emerging threat?

Baseline for Leader-Development—The Army Training and Leader-Development Panel Officer Study (ATLDP)

The Army is continually trying to figure out what traits, attributes, and competencies our future leaders should possess in relation to the emerging threats. In the 1990s with an initiative called Force XXI, the Army looked at how the 21st century would shape its future leaders. The Army War College brought in experts from throughout the Army and conducted numerous future based simulations to identify leader requirements. The Army Research Institute (ARI), Center for Army Leadership (CAL), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), and United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) all conducted research and analysis to identify future leader characteristics [9]. Consequently, in June 2000, the ATLDP panel started mission analysis for comprehensive field interviews and surveys, followed by professional analysis and recommendations to the CSA and various general officers. The panel organized into study groups that assessed the operational, institutional, and self-development pillars of the Army's leader-development model. Another study group looked at the Army's culture as it relates to

officer development. The panel executed an aggressive charter based on guidance from the CSA and the Commanding General (CG) of TRADOC. These study groups contacted approximately 13,500 officers in 61 worldwide locations, encompassing all cohorts, components, and major commands using surveys, focus group interviews, personal interviews, and independent research [10].

In general, the field gave us troubling feedback to include many Army practices that were out of balance with Army beliefs. The feedback included

- an undisciplined operational pace;
- junior officers not receiving adequate leader-development experiences;
- micromanagement perceived to be pervasive, contact between senior leaders and subordinates has diminished;
- OER is a source of mistrust and anxiety;
- personnel management requirements drive operational assignments at the expense of quality developmental experiences;
- Officer Education System (OES) does not provide full spectrum experiences, and majority of officers report they have no mentors [11].

Since these results were released in 2001, the Army has implemented many new initiatives and strategies; however, through my research and experience, many of the above perceptions still exist in varying degrees in today's force. These deficiencies will not just go away overnight and hope is not a course of action when dealing with these issues. There is an art and science to effective leader-development that is also linked to personalities and emotions.

The ATLDP study continues to be a current baseline for ongoing efforts and studies for cultural change in leader-development. Along with the events of September 11th that highlighted our uncertain security environment, strategic level leaders and senior mentors (*graybeards*) have guided the ATLDP recommendations and action plans. Consequently, a Leader-Development Council of Colonels and a General Officer Steering Committee was developed for oversight and tracking of ATLDP actions. Over the past five years, many other leader-development studies, panels, and task forces have been conducted building on the seven ATLDP's recommended strategic imperatives—Army Culture, OES, Training, Systems Approach to Training, Training

and Development Model/Management Process, and Lifelong Learning [12]. The ATLDP also enabled critical future funding for various programs and agencies, established a single Army proponent for training and leader-development, and prioritized the review of our then leadership manual FM 22-100. The ATLDP ultimately pushed leader-development to the forefront of the Army strategic priority list. The findings and recommendations spearheaded the movement to change our leader-development and specifically noted the importance of adaptability and self-awareness in leaders. This was the premise and beginning of the multi-skilled (*Pentathlete*) concept and the foundation of our current leader attributes and core competencies found in FM 6-22.

Is Field Manual 6-22 (Army Leadership) on the Mark?

Although this paper will not get into a detailed analysis of FM 6-22, it is worth some discussion based on the context of leader-development. The new (October 2006) FM 6-22 will produce significant doctrinal impact, relevance, and direction for our current/future leader-development strategy. Along with the ATLDP study, it can be considered another step forward in our pursuit to help shape the next generation of leaders.

In late 2001, with the Army's focus shifting to the current Global War on Terror (GWOT), a Leader-Development and Education (LDE) Task Force was started to ensure ATLDP initiatives were still relevant. At the same time, the CAL and the ARI conducted a fifteen month leader competency study aimed to develop future leader requirements. This study reviewed 50 years of leadership doctrine, hundreds of research reports, and articles describing critical leader characteristics. It also analyzed numerous civilian/business leadership competency models and other armed forces models to see how they developed, labeled, and described the competencies [13]. From this study, came the draft framework of eight competencies that were further reviewed by the Combined Arms Center and eventually updated in our leadership manual Field Manual (FM) 22-100. At this point, several drafts, recommendations, and study groups drafted the proposed attributes and core leader competencies, while simultaneously including feedback from the Leader-Development Council of Colonels and Leader-Development General Officer Steering Committee. The competency validation used many approaches and comparisons to include: AR 600-100; service competency models—Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Ulmer's

Leader Preference Behaviors, United States Military Academy Cadet Performance Report, Strategic leadership competencies—Wong, TRADOC Common Core Tasks, and the Pentathlete construct [14].

The result is the leader requirement model (Figure 2) in FM 6-22 that was approved by the CSA in July 2006.

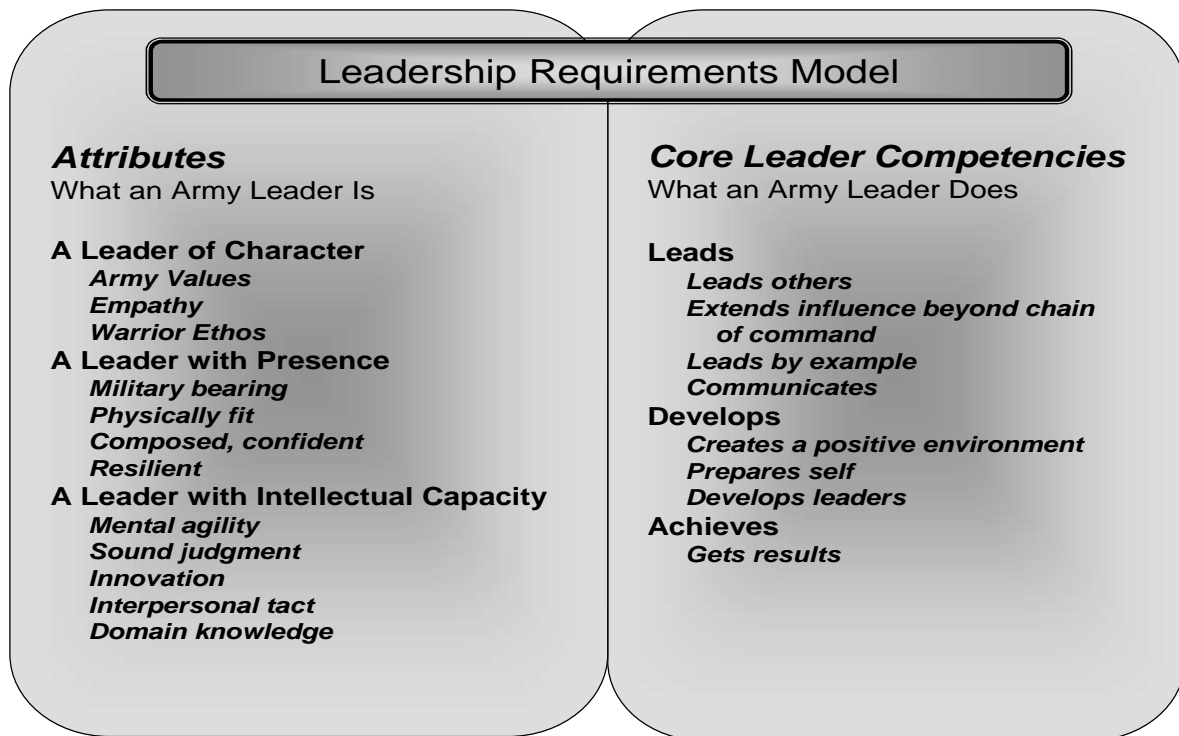


Figure 2. Army Leadership Requirements Model [15].

These attributes and core competencies were also staffed through all the major agencies responsible for Army leader-development. This included future looking organizations and activities such as: Officer of the Secretary of Army and Transition Team for the Pentathlete concept, Personnel Policy Branch G1, Management Support Division HRC, Center for Army lessons learned for leadership observations, CAL for impact on common core task list (OES, NCOES, WOES, ILE learning objectives), J7/JCS for joint competency models for 06 level officers, and Army Research Institute for research projects on accelerated leader-development [16].

The heart of the model focuses on what a leader is and what a leader does. This leader requirements model is comprehensive, relevant, and smartly designed to apply to a myriad of environments nested throughout the three levels of leadership—direct, organizational, strategic (Fig. 3) [17].

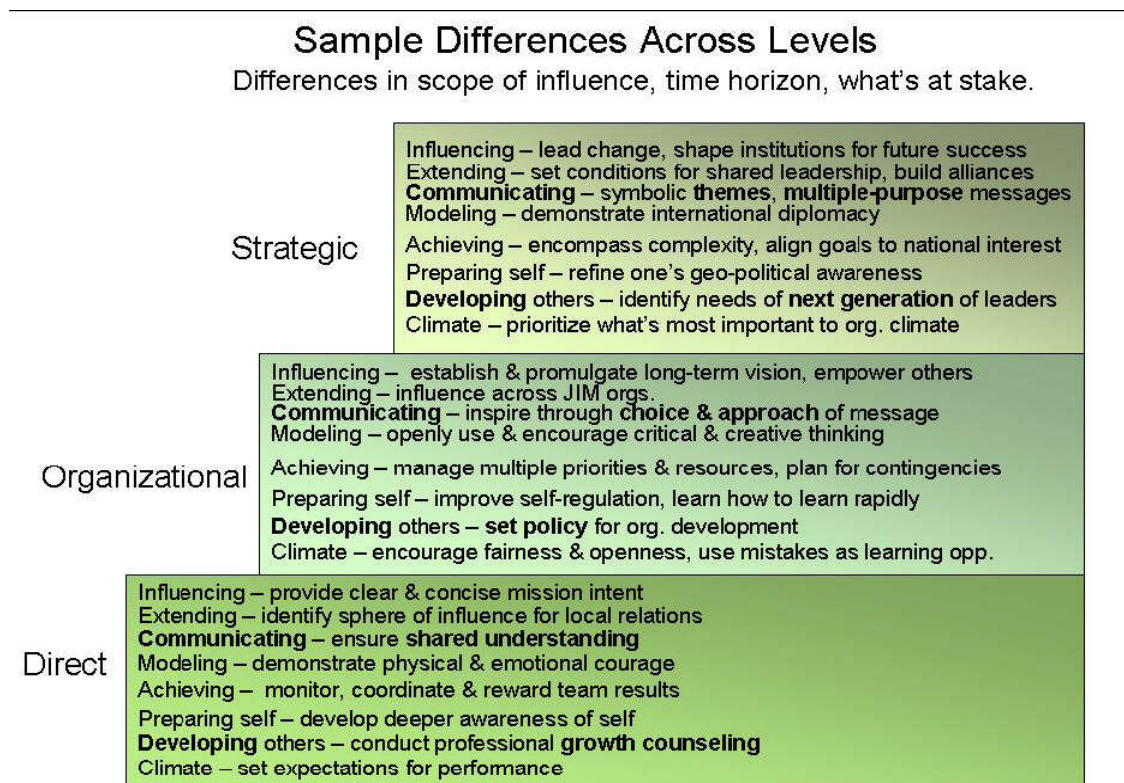


Figure 3. Levels of Leadership.

FM 6-22 effectively links the Army requirements model to all levels of leadership, with the core competencies providing the baseline of effective leader characteristics across the entire leader spectrum. The eight core competencies are a relevant baseline that can be used to evaluate leader-development and will be depicted later in this paper. As leaders advance through their careers, the challenges and complexities accordingly increase. Chapters 11 and 12 of FM 6-22 effectively examines the core leader competencies (also highlighted in Figure 3) and discusses

how leaders should refine and adapt to the increased levels of responsibility and constant changing environments.

While drafting the final version of FM 6-22, there were concerns that the Pentathlete concept was not entirely addressed nor explained in appropriate detail. Though the final Review of Education, Training, and Assignments for Leaders (RETAL) report did not directly identify shortcomings of FM 6-22, it mentions that “leader-development requires additional emphasis in the areas of mental agility, cross-cultural awareness, governance, and enterprise management” [18]. This was later addressed by the Army in a future initiative called Army Leaders of the 21st century (AL21). CAL specifically coordinated with the CSA’s office on the coverage of the Pentathlete concept and concluded the new FM 6-22 adequately captured the essence of the multi-skilled leader. CAL also coordinated for the following definition of the Pentathlete concept be incorporated into DA PAM 350-58 and AR 600-100: “Pentathletes are multi-skilled, innovative, adaptive, and situationally aware professionals who demonstrate character in everything that they do, are experts in the profession of arms, personify the warrior ethos in all aspects from warfighting to statesmanship to enterprise management, and boldly confront uncertainty and solve complex problems” [19].

As time goes on, the Army will always continue to evaluate, modify, and adapt our leadership doctrine to meet the demands for today and tomorrow’s leaders. FM 6-22 is a well researched and well written manual that captures what leaders should be and what leaders should do. It is user friendly with numerous examples and vignettes, which help visualize and describe what right looks like. It sets the foundation for development and growth in all three leader-development domains and promotes life long learning. It also puts needed emphasis on developing leaders, setting a positive command climate, mentorship, and counseling which all have strategic implications for unit success and the long-term health of our organizations.

The Way Ahead

The Army must continue to smartly invest resources and energy to develop a multi-skilled leader able to operate in numerous unmatched environments. The term *Pentathlete* was originally conceived and brought to life by the former Army Chief of Staff, GEN Peter Schoomaker. The CAL previously covered the pentathlete definition. Essential to highlight and

significantly different from our current approach is the distinction that this pentathlete must not only possess traditional warfighting skills, but be more than familiar with the national elements of power when working in the appropriate spectrum of operations. In a moments notice, he or she must be able to make correct decisions under uncertain conditions, without the need for lengthy examination of facts and information... going with a *gut* instinct developed from real experience and challenging preparation. This concept led the Army, in June 2006, to respond with AL21 to improve its leader-development strategy. The AL21 was a direct result from the CSA's guidance and RETAL study to determine how leaders are developed into "Pentathletes" that must be able to operate successfully in the contemporary operating environment (COE) [20]. The Army G-3/5/7 published the AL21 implementation guidance, which establishes procedures to achieve the following RETAL Task Force recommendations pertaining to civilians, NCO's, and officers. Listed below is the officer category:

- Expand competency to full spectrum... equally adept at non-kinetic competencies;
- Broaden to full spectrum culture; and
- Address gaps: mental agility, cultural awareness, governance, enterprise management and strategic leadership [21].

Some respected retired general officers also see the need for change in our leader-development strategy. After returning from Iraq on a critical fact finding mission, MG (Ret) Robert Scales and GEN (Ret) Barry McCaffrey testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee. They stressed the need for a new cultural and cognitive dominance on the battlefield, and success will be defined as much in terms of capturing the human and cultural rather than the geographical high ground [22]. MG (Ret) Scales gave the following example to highlight his point:

The image of very junior soldiers, isolated in some distant outpost, performing peacekeeping missions one moment and engaging the enemy the next reaffirms the truth that tomorrow's soldiers must acquire the skills and wisdom to lead indirectly—skills formerly reserved for officers of a much higher grade and maturity. They must be able to act alone in ambiguous and uncertain circumstances, fight with soldiers they cannot touch, and think so as to anticipate rather than react to the enemy's action. We can make such soldiers. But it takes time [23].

It does take time to develop these types of soldiers, but I would submit that they are in our ranks right now. Almost five years of combat has jump-started and accelerated the leader-development process and deposited these adaptive leaders at the Army's doorstep; however, the foreseeable security landscape dictates that these leaders be exposed to full-spectrum operations earlier in their careers. These operations would include strategic education, utilization of current OIF/OEF experience in the right places (operational field/schoolhouse), and appropriately modification of the professional OES to promote lifelong learning. The strategic pause between wars enjoyed in the past is not the reality of the future—the Army must change the timelines of our traditional institutional curriculums as they are not realistic for an Army at war with an adaptive and determined enemy [24].

The Current OIF/OEF Veteran

Critical to the future educational institution is our current crop of young veterans. These talented company grade officers have various degrees of combat experience from counterinsurgency operations to nation building during the same or multiple combat tours. Furthermore, these leaders recognize the strategic implications of an uncertain complex Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom environment. Over the past few years there have been numerous vignettes and stories written about our leaders demonstrating adaptive, agile, and innovative decision making skills during difficult combat operations. There are daily scenarios where our soldiers, Non Commissioned Officers, and officers are faced with split second life or death decisions and are routinely making the right call.

I have witnessed these adaptive warriors first hand during two tours in Iraq as an Attack Helicopter Battalion Commander. During one mission while acting as the Air Mission Commander (AMC) of an attack weapons team, I had just established communications with one of our supported ground units. They immediately pushed me down to a manned check point outside the city of Baji, Iraq. The report was a suspected white-taxi, four-door car (VBIED) with one occupant and his hands were tied to the steering wheel traveling down the primary avenue of approach headed toward the CP. The problem was there were many white cars that fit the description and the traffic was two way and heavy. We began to fly in a profile that would deter oncoming traffic headed towards the CP. We then identified a vehicle that fit the description

about two kilometers away traveling at a high rate of speed toward the friendly CP. We attempted to use our 30 millimeter cannon to fire warning shots but could not get a clear shot due to the density of traffic. The platoon leader at the CP was alerted, while we continued to give closure rates and distance to the CP. I could hear discussions becoming more intense on the ground internal frequency reference getting clearance of fires.

What happened next occurred in seconds. We tried one more time to slow the vehicle but could not positively identify the number of occupants in the vehicle and it was now within 800 meters of the CP. At about 500 meters from the CP, the vehicle began to reduce its speed and the soldiers at the CP were ready to engage the suspected VBIED. The young leader now had to make a split second decision: request my Apaches to engage the vehicle with possible collateral damage; engage the vehicle with his assets without complete positive identification; or let it get closer to further develop the situation and possibly put his soldiers at increased risk. At about 300 meters, the vehicle continued to slow and his soldiers realized there were several passengers in the backseat which turned out to be children. They did not engage; thus avoiding killing innocent civilians and not making a possible strategic mistake. The young leader and his soldiers displayed a tremendous amount of discipline in the face of extreme pressure and complexity. This type of scenario happens frequently in Iraq. It is not a black-and-white war; every tactical situation possesses difficult circumstances that can be linked to strategic outcomes. This is a great example of how we need to teach our young leaders not *what to think*, but *how to think* during uncertain chaotic situations where they rapidly develop a situation and make the proper decision under extreme pressure.

Another example of dynamic and adaptive leadership happened with one of my young warrant officers, CW2 John Bailey. He was the Air Mission Commander of an attack weapons team responding to troops in contact over the city of Talafar, Iraq. Insurgents had engaged friendly troops from a third floor structure in the middle of town. CW2 Bailey quickly established communications with the ground forces in contact and maneuvered his team of Apaches to get situational awareness. The ground forces requested a Hellfire missile be fired into a window on the third floor of a building from where they had taken fire. As this was transpiring, CW2 Bailey was using the optics on the Apache Longbow and determined there was a family

visible on the second floor of the building. He promptly informed the ground forces of the situation and stated there was too much risk of collateral damage with a Hellfire missile but requested 30 millimeter be employed instead which was immediately approved. He fired 30 millimeter and neutralized the enemy with no harm to innocent civilians. CW2 Bailey clearly received clearance of fires from the ground unit and could of easily destroyed the building, but because he possessed competent, and adaptive decision making skills he ultimately made the right decision under intense combat conditions.

Company grade leaders are coming out of Iraq and Afghanistan with multiple skill sets and a capacity to deal with many multi-role functions in postwar Iraq. Dealing with this type of complexity is exactly what our future leader-development vision emphasizes. Leonard Wong's monograph *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom* gives numerous observations collected from junior Army leaders; and highlighting their adaptability and skills used in dealing with complexity on this current battlefield. Wong states, "when examining the roles required of our junior officers in OIF, the question is not which role, but how many? Unlike previous deployments where debates centered on whether combat arms soldiers could shift from being aggressive warriors to functioning as calming peacekeepers, OIF requires junior leaders to be warriors, peacekeepers, and nation-builders simultaneously" [25].

One field artillery lieutenant from the Wong report commented on assuming various roles in OIF:

It wasn't exactly what I thought it would be because I pictured myself fighting—laying steel down, destroying stuff. But this is fine; this is what it is about. It is about being flexible. It is about being able to conduct any mission as a soldier first and a leader first—not worried about being an artilleryman first [26].

Another young armor officer had this to say about becoming a better officer in general:

Am I a better tanker? Probably not. My tank is not here. I have not been in a tank for 6 months... my specialization in armor is probably getting worse, but my general knowledge as an Army officer is exponentially increasing every day because I am exposed to so much now... I feel I am much more well-rounded—not specialized so much—but much more well-rounded [27].

Multi-skilled and well-rounded is what we need to succeed in the current fight but one note of caution. We cannot have a generation of young leaders that have totally abandon their core branch competencies. This will not happen with the proper balance in our education system.

FM 6-22 defines adaptability as an effective change in behavior in response to an altered situation. Furthermore, adaptable leaders can scan uncertain environments, quickly evaluate the situation, and are keenly aware of what it takes to accomplish the mission in the changed environment [28]. This definition is linked to the Army Research Institute (ARI) definition for the Army Special Warfare School. Furthermore, in a study entitled, “Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric Threats,” military analyst John Tillson had this to say about adaptability as it should apply to the Army:

Adaptability is a cognitive quality. It cannot be assured by technology alone. Modern technology increases the tempo of war, but it does not assure adaptability. Adaptability has little to do with weapons, munitions, vehicles, platforms, or the things upon which war ministries have labored so long and lovingly. Adaptability has to be the product of people who can face the unexpected with calm resolve while finding ways to turn the tables [29].

There is no doubt the Army has developed a generation of adaptive leaders ripe to facilitate change in both operational units and the schoolhouse. This highlights a transformational change of behavior that will hopefully enable these leaders to teach and lead tomorrow’s Army; resulting in a movement toward cultural change. This generation of combat experience brings much to the plate and will help push the Army from the bottom to evolve our OES. However, this must be linked with a committed senior leader vision from the top. This paper will now examine some recent surveys and studies from the field reference leader-development, then make some recommendations for the way forward.

Recent Feedback from the Field

In April of 2007, General Casey assumed the position of the 36th CSA. It appears he has sustained the leader-development momentum with his initiative # 5: *Accelerating change in leader-development programs to grow leaders for the future strategic environment*. During a research visit to Ft Leavenworth in June 2007 to speak to the Director of Center for Army Leadership, there was in fact a leader-development study being conducted as a result of the

CSA's initiative # 5. The results are still pending, but other data gathered from recent CAL surveys, and an informative CAL leadership baseline review demonstrates how current deployments have affected leader-development

Supporting our earlier discussion reference OIF/OEF veterans, on 26 April 2007, the CG TRACOC & Deputy Undersecretary of the Army developed the following hypothesis: Combat operations give leaders an operational and strategic perspective they otherwise wouldn't have, the Army probably has a new baseline [30]. The challenge for CAL was there had been no known previous leadership baselines. Consequently, their analysis was based in relation to the eight core competencies in FM 6-22, the pentathlete qualities of a multi-skilled leader, and on "self-report or from observational ratings of subordinate, superior or peer performance" [31].

The data in Figure 4 indicates leaders were much more effective in some of the pentathlete-type concepts while deployed, especially leading subordinates during times of imminent danger and adapting to uncertain situations. This premise supports the above hypothesis and previous discussion about our veterans. We now must capture this experience and harness this combat veteran capability; placing these officers both in operational units and the schoolhouses. Another study completed by ARI Survey asked 27,871 officers the following question: How do deployments affect leader-development in terms of their rater providing leader-development opportunities? Fewer currently deployed officers favorably assess their rater. The percentage dropped from 62 percent nondeployed to 51 percent deployed [32]. What does this tell us? One answer may be that combat leaders don't have the time or are not taking the time to continue to mentor and coach our younger officers? It is obvious leaders are getting results leading by example on the battlefield but are we effectively developing leaders through deliberate coaching, counseling and mentorship during year long deployments? Good performers getting good results may not be good leaders, and in the end may not be creating good organizational climates.

How Do Deployments Affect Leader-Development?

Proportion of leaders rating assignments as effective or very effective at preparing them for the following:

	<u>Non-deployed</u>	<u>Deployed</u>
Assume responsibilities typical of higher echelons	53%	76%
Interact with people of other cultures	27%	78%
Team with leaders from agencies outside the Army	35%	70%
Adapt to unexpected situations	51%	86%
Develop a broad operational perspective	38%	79%
Lead in situations of imminent physical danger	18%	85%

Figure 4. ACLD—Accelerating Change in Leader-Development Survey [33].

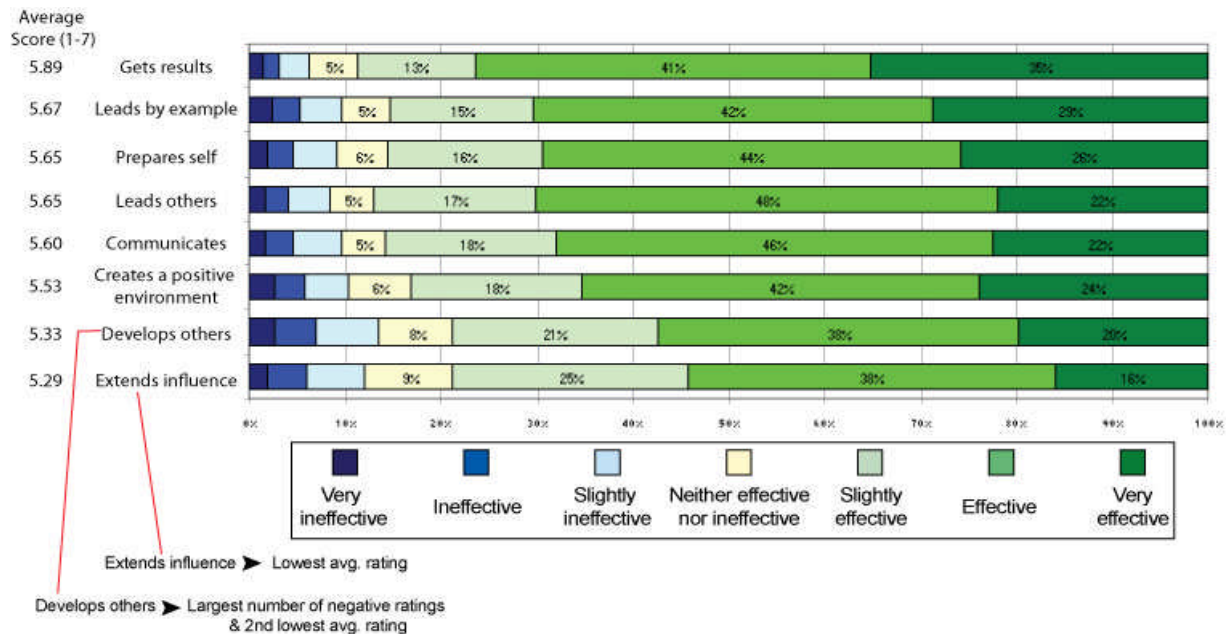


Figure 5. ACLD survey, accurate within 1.4% N = 4,637.

Figure 5 lists the core leader competency ratings overview and shows developing others at the bottom of the scale; receiving the largest number of negative ratings [34].

In 2006, a CAL leadership assessment survey asked 3,645 leaders: What changes in leader-development would have the greatest impact on future leaders? [35]. The most popular answer was increased senior leader involvement in subordinate development (mentoring, coaching, counseling, and providing feedback). Some of these findings seem to have strings attached to the 2000 ATLDP findings. Does the Army still have issues with leader-follower mistrust resulting in excessive micromanagement, and lack of contact between senior leaders and subordinates?

Pertaining to the institutional side of leader-development a notable proportion of 2006 PME course graduates report their course contributed a slight extent or not at all to their preparation of:

	OBC	BOLC	CCC	ILE
Army Values	33%	43%	47%	40%
Warrior Ethos	33%	43%	47%	48%
Culture	36%	40%	34%	18%
Adapt to Mission Change	32%	39%	31%	24%
Current Leader Tasks	32%	43%	37%	30%
Wartime Duties	30%	41%	30%	29%
Successful Leadership	28%	39%	35%	28%
Future Assignments	31%	42%	26%	18%

Figure 6. ARI Survey on Officers Careers 2007.

However, 79-88 percent of the graduates indicate that instruction meets the respective school standards for these courses (to a moderate, great or very great extent) [36]. Although one may draw several conclusions from this data, one can't help but question the PME curriculum and standards being taught. Are we setting our future leaders up for success given the emerging threat... are we teaching them how to think, instead of what to think?

Training and Education = Leader-Development

More than often the two critical words *training* and *education* are used interchangeably when discussing leader-development. There has always been a direct relationship between training and education leading to a reasonable conclusion; the Army focuses on training early in an officer's career and education in the latter stages of ones career. They are nested to two concepts this paper addresses which are teaching people how to think versus what to think. Training is more focused on teaching people what to think, with the repetition of tasks and the preferred method of learning when the goal is to perform operations for a specified task where completion/success can be clearly measured such as training for a deployment [37]. Education refers to teaching people how to think and what the answers ought to be and deals more with deeper thought, indirect leadership, and consensus building. The strategic preparation that should be started earlier in an officers career is primarily a function of education—especially in history, politics, economics, regional and cultural affairs [38].

The leader-development model is essentially composed of three domains: institutional, operational, and self-development. The institutional domain is the Army's formal Officer Education System also known as the schoolhouse environment. The operational domain consists of our operational unit assignments. This area encompasses an officer's unit experience such as a platoon leader, company commander, battalion S3, etc.; whereby they are a product of those leader-development programs all having different goals and standards. The quality and depth of leader-development in the operational domain is based on many factors to include personalities of unit commanders, and type/location of units. Finally, the self-development domain which is loosely structured at best is solely based on the motivation of the individual officer to pursue non-traditional education studies.

Discussion and Recommendations for the Three Leader-Development Domains

There has been much debate about which domain is the most important concerning leader-development. Together, each one serves a critical function and should be properly nested and weighted to facilitate lifelong learning. Even though the institutional pillar must be considered the foundation or baseline, all three domains need continued senior leader emphasis, resourcing, and accountability. The Army must embrace a lifelong learning model that defines

requirements and objectives of all three domains with certain timelines along a given career path. In addition, realistic enforcement and incentive mechanisms must be built in along the way.

Institutional Domain

Inculcate an increased strategic curriculum and focus earlier into our professional education system. This needs to begin at the pre-commissioning level through the Senior Service College. Given the future security environment, don't wait until attending the senior service college to study or in most cases introduce strategic level education to our officer corps. At the right times in an officers career (earlier is better), emphasize regional/cultural awareness, knowledge and understanding of the elements of national power, and Joint/interagency operations.

Send selected officers to advanced civil schooling to broaden their cultural experiences. This was a common thread and recommendation throughout my research. If so many studies, surveys, senior officers, and work groups are recommending this course of action, why are we not doing it? Reality is that the GWOT has dictated so many assignments to support the current manpower requirements, it may not be feasible at this time. This coupled with an officer assignment system that often looks unfavorably on graduate school, JCS or congressional fellow type career track may slow this process. This is a cultural issue that the Army must realize and assess. What type of career model and assignments are appropriate for our future officers who will probably operate in nondoctrinal, joint/interagency/multinational environments across the full spectrum of operations [39].

In a leader-development survey sent out to select company grade through General officers, the question—what recommendation would you make to change or modify our current professional military education system to better prepare our future leaders for the new emerging threat? One former assistant division commander for the 101st Airborne Division said, “modify ILE to send at least 10% of each class to civilian fellowships at the finest academic institutions in the US and abroad. Academic credentials are a measure of credibility in the interagency, serves as a “yeast” in the liberal bread that constitutes many of the upper academic institutions, an incentive for top performers to remain in the Army, builds experience that is useful on the Joint Staff, and provides an expanded perspective outside the myopic confines of the Army “ [40].

This issue is tied to one of the ATLDP findings of “Personnel management versus leader-development.”

The Army career model, timelines, patterns, and assignment process governed by DA PAM 600-3, Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management needs to be revisited. Modifications and tradeoffs would have to occur because our current assignment process, in most cases, is “gate sensitive” or quota dictated rather than leader-development focused. Our total career management system may have to be re-evaluated in terms of timelines for promotion and command, if we are truly serious about sending more officers earlier in their careers to civilian institutions for advance degrees. Consequently, this would also enhance officer retention. In May of 2007, the Army introduced company grade retention incentives which included a critical skills bonus of \$20K, civilian graduate schooling, military schooling (Ranger school or Defense Language Institute), branch/functional area transfer, or a post of choice in return for additional active duty service obligation (ADSO) [41]. This incentive also states graduate school options are limited because of funding and competing priority assignment requirements. This incentive is not only a result of our current manning challenges, but also to increase nearly 6,000 new captain and major positions. Whether this influences our young officers to stay with the team or not, time will tell. However, these initiatives must not be in the form of a retention bonus, they must be part of our leader-development strategy to develop adaptive leaders for the 21st century.

Assign a significant proportion of our OIF/OEF veterans to the schoolhouses. Some of our young leaders are now on their second, third, and even fourth combat deployment. They need a break and the Army needs their experiences being taught in the classroom. However, this is easier said than done, but will benefit both the officer’s professional development and the Army as a whole.

Incorporate critical thinking and rapid crisis decision making scenarios whenever and wherever feasible. BG David Fastabend had this valuable insight about critical thinking:

Critical thinking is a learned behavior that is underpinned by education. The Army education system, moreover, can be our most effective lever of cultural change. Many of our most important cultural shifts can trace their origins to the schoolhouse. A thorough

review of the institutional educational system is required to assess its effectiveness at engendering critical thinking [42].

Complexity and stress must be built into academic instruction balanced between traditional and irregular warfare. Primarily in the captains career course (CCC), case studies and relevant lessons learned from the current GWOT should be studied and evaluated. Challenging cultural situations, with incomplete information, should be introduced so leaders learn to digest the information and make a feasible, fast decision using rapid decision making techniques. After commanding a Stryker Brigade in OIF, Colonel (P) Robert Brown talks about what he calls “*instinctive leadership*” on the current battlefield. He points out “unlike the commanders of completely data-centric units who rely on volumes of information that may not lead to any meaningful action, instinctive leaders cultivate an overall understanding of the environment, the enemy, and the enemy’s leaders—and ultimately make the right decision in complex situations” [43]. Of course, it takes practice to develop the correct instincts, but what better time to start then during our officer resident education courses.

Do not shorten the duration of our academic schools. The Army not only needs to sustain the length of our current resident schools, but consideration must be given to increasing the length to adequately cover the needed strategic focus, and teaching our officers the art of how to think rather than what to think. In discussions with officers from TRADOC and various schoolhouses the pressure to shorten the times spent in resident schools comes from the decreased time or “reset” between deployments, and, of course, funding issues. Supposedly with the advent of the ARFORGEN model there is sufficient time during the reset phase to accomplish officer education at the individual and unit levels. It is highly unlikely that this will ever happen. Furthermore, TRADOC is pushing distance learning completed at the officer’s home station whereby this requirement moves to the self-development and operational domains. This briefs well, but would be a serious injustice to our professional officer corps. The operational and self-development domains need structure but taking away from our resident educational system is not the way ahead. In addition, like it or not given our present GWOT OPTEMPO our resident courses (CCC, ILE SSC) are the only break most officers experience before another deployment.

Operational Domain

An officer's opinion of the operational domain is entirely based on his or her past unit or "in the field" experiences. Even though branches within the Army vary some on career progression, good leadership linked to effective unit leader-development programs produces good soldiers and units. It is not rocket science, but why is there so much negative feedback/survey data from the field telling us officers are not properly counseled, let alone coached or mentored? There is nothing more important than the people in your unit—leader-development is all about people. Leaders should be defined by what they leave behind in our people (our legacy/reputation), and our people make up the unit identity that is a direct reflection of the leader.

Leaders must focus on developing others. The critical importance of senior officers coaching and mentoring junior officers cannot be understated. Many officers when asked, what has had the most positive impact on your career? More often than not, they will respond with an experience or lesson taught to them by a senior officer. This is a very emotional and subjective topic in terms of why some leaders are good at this art and others are not. There may be several conclusions: some leaders are simply superior; while others have learned and acquired effective communication and counseling skills along the way; some were never taught how to properly develop others; and some just don't have the communication skills or personality to be effective. Our OES has a critical role in this area to teach basic counseling skills at the earliest time.

Link all counseling with the use of Developmental Support Form (form 68-9-1a). At present, it is only used for junior officers but should be used from warrant officer to General. Not knowing how to counsel effectively and therefore, not being comfortable with the counseling process, have resulted in a cultural aversion to counseling, dialoguing, and development [44]. Developing others is not a contact sport, but rather a shared communications sport... you must have two-way interaction coupled with a positive command climate to effectively lead your unit. A consensus among private sector leader-development professionals is that a full 70 percent of leader-development occurs on the job, 20 percent from other people (leaders, mentors), and 10 percent from training courses [45].

CAL has developed a great tool called the Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader-Development. This concise handbook is designed to provide commanders with an efficient way to develop leaders by: translating feedback into quick applications; prioritizing leader-development activities under conditions of limited resources; integrating unit leader-development into already occurring day-to-day activities; and integrating FM 6-22 leader attributes and competencies consistently across Army leader-development doctrine [46]. This handbook is not just for commanders it provides all leaders with key principles, TTPs, and applications to implement the most effective methods of leader-development focusing on developing others.

Figure 7 illustrates a four tiered process or approach for commanders:

First—Set conditions for leader-development: Create an environment that encourages on the job learning, and get to know the leaders within your unit.

Second—Provide feedback on a leader's actions: Immediate, short bursts of feedback on actual leadership actions enhance leader development in operational assignments.

Third—Integrate learning: Leverage leaders who are role models in your unit. Encourage mentoring, training, reflection, and study. Learning from others is one of the most effective and efficient methods of development.

Fourth—Create a legacy: Modify job assignments to challenge leaders. Be deliberate about the selection and succession of leaders. Integrate leader-development across day-to-day unit activities. Evaluate its effectiveness.

Figure 7. Diagram from the Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader-Development.

Create a positive command climate. Among the top areas to improve in a recent (July 07) CAL leadership baseline review were creating a positive environment and leader-follower trust. A negative command climate is like cancer that slowly erodes away a unit's combat readiness, leader-development, unit identity, morale, and trust of its leaders. Whereas, in the opposite spectrum Marcia Whicker cites, "under trustworthy leadership, the mission of the organization is pursued collectively so that the combined resources of the people working in the organization are greater than the sum of the individual parts" [47].

The positive and negative of command climate has been with us for years. In Colonel Reed's article Toxic Leadership he highlights the first commander of Easy Company in the book *Band of Brothers*. The book's author, Stephen Ambrose, writes, "anyone who has ever been in the Army knows the type. He was the classic chickenshit who generated maximum anxiety over minimum significance. He had poor judgment, but his style was what generated resentment. He could not see the unrest and the contempt that was breeding in the troops. You led by fear or you led by example. He led by fear" [48]. Fortunately this commander left the unit before Easy Company conducted combat operations. Furthermore, in 2003, 20 Army War College students focused on the topic of command climate and leaders' roles in shaping it. They provided an insightful description of toxic leaders:

Destructive leaders are focused on visible short-term mission accomplishment. They provide superiors with impressive, articulate presentations and enthusiastic responses to missions. But, they are unconcerned about, or oblivious to staff or troop morale and/or climate. They are seen by the majority of subordinates as arrogant, self-serving, inflexible, and petty [49].

Chances are, along the way many of us have run into this type of leader which resulted in a poor command climate/environment. Because an adverse unit climate has a direct link to leaders such as this, what do we do about it? Our Army should consider a few tools to identify toxic leaders and also evaluate unit climate and its long-term health. Steven Jones in his research paper: Improving Accountability for Effective Command Climate: A Strategic Imperative talks about two such tools—the command climate survey (CCS) and 360-degree assessment [50].

The CCS, which should be conducted within 90 days of assumption of command and annually thereafter, assesses unit readiness, morale, racial and sexual harassment, leadership, cohesion, and morale. The CCS is a commander's tool to assess their own unit, and is extremely beneficial if used properly. Who in the external chain of command or agency is looking at the commander? Follow up with the 2000 CSIS Study Report that called for climate surveys becoming part of the unit status reporting (USR) system [51]. The CCS should be used at all levels, not just at the company level. This is a sensitive topic but one that is aligned with the overall health and welfare of our organizations.

Integrate the 360-degree assessment at various times in an officer's career and especially during command tours. The current TRADOC commander, General Wallace, recently approved a 360-degree assessment Army wide program. CAL currently has the responsibility, and is working the implementation guidelines and details of this program. The benefit is feedback from various members in a unit may highlight toxic type leaders, and indirectly contribute to an improved command climate.

A valuable message from the 20 AWC student study stated; “we have a system that is totally supervisor-centric in terms of incentives, rewards, and punishments. The only person whose opinion counts is the person who writes the OER. It is time for an expanded evaluation process that considers input from peers and subordinates as well as superiors” [52]. This would be a cultural shift but one that seriously needs to be considered. A senior officer concluded, “the OER simply does not provide the Army an evaluation of an officer’s ability to lead a unit or organization in way that fosters cohesion, teamwork, and long-term health of the unit” [53].

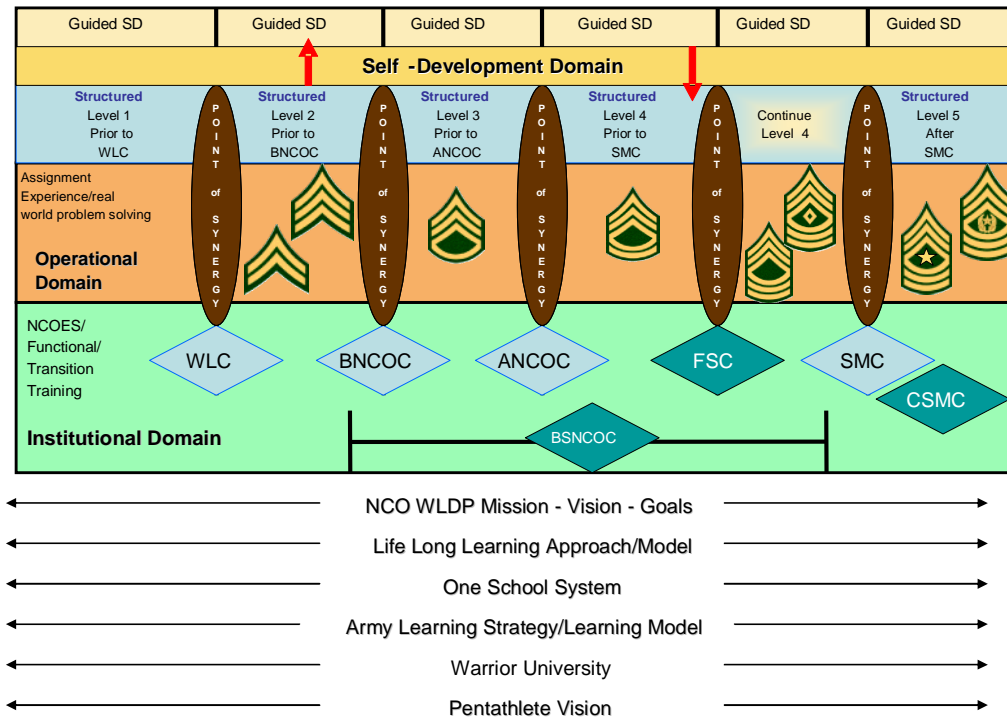
As part of the OER, the rater and senior rater should consider data from the 360 degree feedback and the CCSs. Said another way, “it is easy to fool the boss. Leaders can fool some of the people, some of the time. The view you get depends on where you sit” [54]. Senior leaders must start looking at the welfare of units in its entirety, and not so much mission accomplishment of the individual leader. Real strides forward in our culture will not occur if we do not have accountability and enforcement mechanisms set in place.

Self-Development Domain

As previously stated, this domain has the least structure and is not tied to the other domains. It is essentially driven by the individual officer’s motivation, unit situation, and time available. The key for success is an overall model that will define each domain, establish objectives, and implement accountability measures. Although this paper is focused on the OES, Senior NCO leadership developed, an effective model synchronizes all three domains. OES needs to continue to make the same advances. The below slide (figure 8.) comes from a CAC/CAL decision brief to the TRADOC Commander to develop and implement a structured/guided self-development program [55].

Life Long Learning Strategy Concept Sketch

Three linked/synchronized domains. Content for each level should be appropriately addressed and linked across one or more domains.



5

Figure 8. Learning Strategy Concept.

Though the NCOES has different parameters, timelines, and gates, it remains an excellent example of a well thought out model that better defines the whole leader-development concept of promoting life long learning. Most noteworthy are the five levels within the self-development domain. The structured self-development requirements are defined, enforceable, and the guided and personal self-development tasks have various incentives. The officer corps would be well advised to pursue a similar strategy.

Conclusion

My first commander always said to *expect the unexpected*—three simple words that summarize our future security environment. Our enemies hide in the shadows; blending with the local population to include here in America. They are ruthless, patient, and they constantly adapt and aggressively seek gaps in our military and civilian systems to exploit for their own cause. In Iraq, the enemy is frequently compared to dealing with fire ant hills... the minute you destroy one nest, they migrate to another and pop-up somewhere else. Unfortunately, these nests may now appear anywhere in the world. September 11th taught us the homeland is vulnerable and this dynamic will not change in the foreseeable future. A remark made by General Retired Montgomery Meigs put it this way and certainly gets your attention:

The Army has a wonderful ability to adapt to a crisis, but we have to be better than that and adapt to the environment before the crisis hits, because in the 21st century the crisis may be so different that you will not be able to adapt quickly enough. Just having good soldiers isn't going to cut it [56].

Preparation for the unexpected is very difficult. General George C. Marshall gave wise counsel when he said, "Study the first six months of the next war" [57]. His lesson was to apply constant preparation for the future fight. The problem today is how to deal with the complexities of this asymmetrical threat and the realization that there is no time, or strategic pause, to figure it out. In 1940, General Marshall also had a stern message for Congress when he warned, "We have to be prepared to meet the worst situation that may develop" [58]. This is obviously our current situation and we must produce adaptable, multi-talented leaders and units to deal with this global unpredictability.

Leader-development: Are we keeping pace? We have been thrust into an unprecedented struggle against an enemy who hates everything about our way of life. Consequently, our OES and leader-development programs have produced outstanding leaders that have successfully adapted to a cunning enemy operating under extreme conditions during full spectrum operations. No other Army in the world could accomplish what has been done over the past 4 years. However, we cannot rest on our laurels—we have to win this war in the human dimension. We are sprinting hard trying to keep pace. But the outlook is positive with senior leader emphasis

like the new CSA's initiative # 5—*accelerating change in leader-development programs to grow leaders for the future strategic environment*. This focus must continue with passion and commitment for the most important pillar of transformation—leader-development. Development of a culture of innovation will not be advanced by panels, studies, or power point charts. Cultural change begins with behavior and the leaders who shape it [59]. With senior leaders shaping change from the top, and young adaptive Pentathlete veterans pushing from the field and schoolhouses, the future holds significant promise that we will meet the challenges of the 21st century.

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